DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 460 319 CG 029 267

AUTHOR	Canter, Andrea, Ed.
TITLE	Crisis and Loss: Information for Educators.
INSTITUTION	National Association of School Psychologists, Silver Spring, MD.
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	21p.; Compiled from articles that have previously appeared in "Communique."
AVAILABLE FROM	National Association of School Psychologists, 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814. Fax: 301-657-0275.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Communique; spec iss Spr 1999
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Coping; *Crisis Intervention; Cultural Influences; Death; Elementary Secondary Education; Guns; Planning; *School Personnel; School Psychologists; Violence
IDENTIFIERS	Memorials; Traumas

ABSTRACT

Crisis intervention is a vital component of any comprehensive approach to maintaining psychological well being. An active school-based crisis intervention team can make a powerful contribution to a school's sense of community and commitment to taking care of each other. This special edition presents promising practices that may be helpful to school personnel working with students in crisis situations. This issue includes the following articles: (1) "Children Killing Children" (Kevin Dwyer); (2) "School Crisis Planning: Questions Answered" (Scott Poland); (3) "Memorials: Guidelines for Educators and Communities" (Cathy Paine); (4) "Death: Dealing with Crisis at School;" (5) "Disaster: Helping Children Cope" (Debbie Waddell, Alex Thomas); (6) "Cultural Perspectives on Trauma and Critical Response" (adapted by Kris Sieckert); (7) "Disasters: Developing a Crisis Response Plan" (Debbie Waddell, Alex Thomas); (8) "Childhood Responses to Trauma" (adapted by Ted Feinberg); (9) "Student Violence: Warning Signs;" (10) "Safe Schools Resources" (compiled by Andrea Canter); (11) "What Is a School Psychologist?" Some articles provide references and relevant resources. (MKA)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 460 319

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
S. Gorin
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2B

NASP

Communiqué

National Association of School Psychologists — Spring 1999 Special Edition

SPECIAL EDITION

Inside this issue

Children Killing Children 1
by Kevin Dwyer

School Crisis Planning: Questions Answered 6
by Scott Poland

Memorials: Guidelines for Educators and Communities 9
by Cathy Paine

Death: Dealing with Crisis at School 10

Disaster: Helping Children Cope 12
by Debbie Waddell and Alex Thomas

Cultural Perspectives on Trauma and Critical Response 14
adapted by Kris Sieckert

Disasters: Developing A Crisis Response Plan 16
by Debbie Waddell and Alex Thomas

Childhood Responses to Trauma 16
adapted by Ted Feinberg

Student Violence: Warning Signs 18

Safe Schools Resources 19
Compiled by Andrea Canter

What is a School Psychologist? .. 20

CRISIS AND LOSS
INFORMATION FOR EDUCATORS

A crisis event can happen at any time. Natural disasters, such as an earthquake, hurricane or flood, can physically devastate a whole community. Other crises, such as the recent schoolyard shootings in Oregon, Arkansas and Kentucky, a student suicide or death of a teacher, can emotionally debilitate families, teachers and classmates. Whatever the circumstance, the emotional effects on school staff and students can be significant and pervasive.

Crisis intervention is a vital component of any comprehensive approach to maintaining psychological well-being. An active school-based crisis intervention team can make a powerful contribution to a school's sense of community and commitment to taking care of each other.

Through this publication and other resources, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) continues to foster safe schools and healthy behaviors. In this issue, we share some promising practices that may be helpful and increase the odds that students will learn and grow, even in a crisis situation. ♦

— Dorothy Daugherty, NASP Professional Relations Associate
& Andrea Canter, Ph.D., NCSP, Communiqué Editor

Children Killing Children
Strategies to Prevent Youth Violence

by Kevin P. Dwyer, NCSP
NASP President-Elect

A five-year-old child walks into the grandfather's bedroom and reaches up to the top of the dresser to snatch a handgun. Placing it in a backpack, the child takes the gun to school to kill the kindergarten teacher who put the gun-carrying child in "time-out" for being disobedient the day before. Luckily the teacher finds the gun before it is used. The five-year-old is arrested. A true story, this happened last spring. This is one painful example of the 250,000 or more weapons children will bring to school each year. Some bring guns, some knives, most carry for "protection." However, some, like the kindergartner, bring guns to school to kill adults or other children. Is there an epidemic of violence in our country? The answer is "yes" and we can stop it!

Availability of weapons is but one factor in this epidemic of children killing children. A combination of factors has caused this epidemic, including: (1) too many guns; (2) the media's glorification of violence; (3) poor schooling in social responsibility; (4) the absence of adult care and supervision; and (5) ravages of poverty. Interacting, feeding on each other, together these are the known root causes of this epidemic of violence. Some also feel that a *conspiracy of silence* has allowed this epidemic to fester.

Continued on page 2

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CG029267

■ Children Killing Children... *from page 1*

Sadly, we know a great deal about the causes. We also have proven solutions to both reduce the spread of violence and eradicate much of its lethal results. But it will take sustained community effort, supporting and using a complex of solutions to save our children.

Root Causes: Availability of Guns

It is surprising to me that people are shocked by the news of children killing children with guns in West Paducah, Kentucky, Jonesboro, Arkansas, Springfield, Oregon and a dozen other seemingly safe small towns. With more than 200 million guns privately owned, four guns for every child ages six to sixteen, it is surprising we don't have *more* killings. We should be thankful that the millions of children who have access to guns don't think, more often, that guns are good tools for problem solving. Killings aside, many youths do carry guns. According to a recent article in *Science* magazine, nearly 8% of teenagers surveyed using a highly anonymous computerized questionnaire reported that they carried a gun during the past month (Turner et al., 1998). In another survey by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 11.8% of students reported carrying a weapon (gun, knife or club) in the previous 30 days (CDC, 1995).

Children killing children is not a new problem. It is only a new problem for rural and suburban communities. It is also only recently that younger, preteen children are killing with guns. For decades children shooting children has been a phenomenon of the city, of youthful teen gang members "dissing" rivals or teen drug dealers killing over territory. City teen murders seem as common on nightly news as commercials for antacids. We are only startled by that news broadcast when it is reported that a four-year-old child has fallen victim of the drug dealer's stray bullet. Numbed to the knowledge that black teenage males die from guns at a rate 100 times that of their white counterparts, we seem unaware that, nationally, this gun epidemic kills a child under 18 every 2 hours, is the leading cause of death for black male youth and second leading cause for white male youth. CDC (1995) reports that violence kills more children than all diseases including cancer, and that suicide is the third leading cause of death among teenagers.

In the 1950's, guns were owned by people who enjoyed hunting and sportshooting at round targets. Today guns are purchased for personal protection and for "firepower." Targets are shaped like humans and "self protection" is the mantra of the salesperson: "You can stop anybody with a 357 Magnum." Most tragic is the change in how people publicly talk about guns — the father bragging about his guns while sipping a beer with friends, overlooking the awed expressions of his children standing nearby. Adult show-and-tell. Wait until those children can tell their friends or possibly even show their friends Daddy's Uzi. Is that gun really the family's protector?

Root Causes: Violence in the Media

All of these killings reflect learned behaviors and attitudes. The children who shot their classmates and teachers learned to see violence as a way to deal with discomfort and problems. We teach too many of our children that frustration and angry feelings can be vented through violence, through killing. Television portrays killing as a common, everyday way to solve tense, interpersonal problems. Television shows children that guns are the most effective way to kill.

"The trigger pulls the finger." This is what Dr. Scott Poland, school psychologist and national crisis expert, told the U. S. Congressional Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families on April 28, 1998. Dr. Poland led the crisis team in Jonesboro, Arkansas and West Paducah, Kentucky. He noted that children's access to guns and television, computer games and other media have provided the means and the models for the angry, frustrated, abused or suicidal child to be pulled to the trigger of a gun. Three out of every five television programs contain violence, according to the National Television Violence Study released this year. Research professor Barbara Wilson of the University of California-Santa Barbara noted that 89% of TV movies depict violence as the solution to interpersonal conflict. Television violence contributes significantly to children's learning aggressive behavior. Even heroes are now angry killers. The hero is frequently portrayed as equally violent as the villain, voicing anger just before shooting rapid-firing guns at the bad guys. Frequently, there is no pain, no remorse, no punishment for the killers.

A major network reporter told me recently, "If it bleeds it leads." He said this is what the public prefers. Thus the nightly news affirms to the child that fictional violence is a mirror of reality. The child can only conclude that people really do frequently shoot each other when angry or frustrated. One girl in Jonesboro, a school psychologist reported, tearfully queried her father, "When I get really, really angry, will I shoot somebody?" Children also hear about conspiracy obsessed militia, armed with weapons of war, ready to kill all who disagree with their paranoia. We have disgruntled employees shooting their boss or coworker to resolve real or imagined problems. Most murders occur in homes and involve family, friends or hurt lovers. More models of violence on television, blending fiction with reality, giving tacit permission for more of us to self-determine who is the enemy, who needs to be killed.

Video and computer games mesmerize children. As a therapist, I have dealt with brothers fighting, out of control, for equal time to pull the video-game triggers of "controllers," the mechanism hooked to the television, used to help the preschooler quickly kill the alien before the alien kills the representation of the preschooler on the TV screen. These games reinforce rapid, impulsive responses in young children rather than the cautious, reflective thinking needed to play chess or checkers and necessary to control behavior. Video games brainwash these very young players, producing reflexive knee-jerk responses. Yet, these games are used by many parents as reinforcements, rewarding children for completing their homework or chores. Like television, these stimulating games keep children occupied and entertained while pressured parents, stressed for time, try to manage other responsibilities. One author coined the term "screenagers" for our modern youth, noting that the time children spend in front of the TV and computer screens is ever increasing and may cause some loss of reflection, patience, interpersonal communication skills and even muscle tone.

Root Causes: Family Stress and Child Alienation

Children learn much more from television and from watching adults in their home and community than they do in school. From the earliest years they imitate what they see and hear. They say what we say and do what we do. By the age of twelve they know every family secret and every hiding place for your private videos, magazines and guns. This is why as mental health professionals we warn adults about overstimulating preteens. We warn about the use of vulgarity, out-of-control angry feelings and other behaviors children observe. Children who are overstimulated by sex or spousal violence in their home will, we believe, quickly imitate that behavior in their own relationships. Children who experience violent problem resolution, including spanking, in their home will more likely be violent. Equally, toddlers

who grow up in uncaring, undisciplined or inconsistently disciplined environments will enter school with poor behavioral control.

Drs. George Batsche and Howard Knoff, University of South Florida, report that "bullies" have learned to see the most innocuous behavior of others as hostile and thus are always on the offensive. For bullies and other hostile youth, problems *must* be solved by verbal threat or physical violence (Batsche & Knoff, 1994). Research data reported by Dr. George Bear, University of Delaware (1998), indicate that children learn to be violent when neglected, abused or living in homes or communities where violence is the norm. The roots are formed in preschool years and for many of these children school is the only safe haven in a coercive community of chaos. Poverty plays a role, increasing the risk of exposure for several million children. Batsche and Knoff (1994) report that poverty contributes to the rate of peer group instability, frequent moves, lack of cognitive stimulation, harsh discipline and drug and alcohol abuse, all increasing the risk for childhood aggression. They also caution that many parents in poverty are remarkably able to overcome these factors and raise healthy children.

Unlike the "Leave it to Beaver" fantasy family of the past, children are reared in many single-parent families and homes where both parents work. According to the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, there are more "latchkey" children, ages 10-14 years, going home to an empty house (equipped with video games, cable, soap operas, talk shows and guns) than there are children going home to a parent or remaining in an effective after-school program. Risky behaviors occur with high frequency during this unsupervised time. Again, children of poverty are even more likely to return to an empty house. Today's high divorce rate of 50% can result in more developmental disruption in children's lives. The caretaking parent has additional burdens, stressed to earn an income and run a home on limited resources and finding her(him)self separated from the extended family support system more common to the 1950's. Finding a safe niche and a job, too frequently, requires frequent moves and a patchwork of inadequate child care.

School Responses to Violence

Schools continue to use 1950's remedies to address these complex risk factors. Suspension, expulsion and other punitive temporary removals from education are failed responses to signs of aggression, according to Dr. Russell Skiba of Indiana University's Institute for Child Study and other researchers (Skiba & Peterson, in press). Too frequently, the sequence of escalating events begins in the earliest of grades when the child shows signs of disrespect, of an inability to play cooperatively with others, as well as developmental and academic problems. The child may find him/herself in "time out," learning nothing, rather than in classroom instruction. The correct behavior has not been learned as a skill yet school authorities presume it to be learned at home. The disruptive behavior is punished (or ignored) and the child is not *taught* the correct behavior. Making correct behavioral choices is seen as the parent's responsibility. Soon the child is spending more time in the principal's office than in the classroom. As the years go by, the child, academically frustrated and labeled a troublemaker, learns to escape learning, becoming more frustrated and more aggressive toward peers and teachers. Eventually the "big bang" behavioral problem emerges and the child is removed from schooling altogether or referred to special education. By age 13 this child is on the way to the juvenile justice system.

The school may be rid of the problem but the community remains a victim. The "bully" is now a delinquent. Such children, having identifiable psychological problems, are suspended and expelled and go untreated until they become violent or suicidal. Sadly, school interventions are "too little, too late." The referral for weekly counseling is too late and, frankly, may make the youth less receptive to a more effective remedy for the long-term intense set of problems.

Solutions for Educators, Families and Communities

Simple solutions don't work: We seek simple solutions and simple answers to childhood aggression, to children killing children. We can no longer allow ourselves the luxury of finding someone or something to blame for the more than dozen school shootings since 1992 or for the less sensational but dramatic increase in suicides among teens and preteens, from Chapel Hill, NC to North Dakota. Today's overstimulating, less supportive environment requires multiple interventions by parents, schools, religious groups, volunteers, policymakers and businesses to curb this epidemic. We know it is the combination of the above factors that has produced the problem, yet we continue to look for easy answers. We must address gun access and the media's modeling of impulsive problem-solving together with the overstimulation of children to act like adults in less structured environments. We must teach positive behaviors. We must provide effective schooling and after-school care. Too many children are raising themselves. Too many families are "giving in" to material demands out of stress for not having the time their children need. And poverty costs society far more than we wish to acknowledge.

Prevent gun access: If you are a gun owner, in today's world you must be aware that many children have been conditioned to think of guns as killing toys that can be used to solve problems. Therefore if you need to keep guns in your home and your home is ever open to children, you need trigger locks and a failsafe plan for keeping the guns away from the children. Others who oppose guns should support laws that hold owners responsible for keeping guns out of reach of children. It is particularly critical for parents to keep guns out of reach of children who

Continued on page 4

Communiqué THIS PUBLICATION has been compiled from articles that previously ran in the *Communiqué*, the official newspaper of the National Association of School Psychologists. The content of this document reflects the position and ideas of the authors and does not necessarily represent the position or ideas of the National Association of School Psychologists.

Copyright © 1999. All rights reserved. Articles contained within may be reproduced for private, non-profit use without prior permission provided proper acknowledgment to NASP is given.

EDITOR
Andrea Canter
CQ Editor@aol.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Susan Gorin
(301)657-0270
NASP8455@aol.com

■ Children Killing Children... *from page 3*

may be depressed, show signs of impulsivity or aggressive responses to anger or frustration. Families need to seek help for these children.

If, as a parent and gun owner, you feel unsure about your ability to keep your guns out of your child's reach, or if you or your child is prone to anger, get rid of the guns. Guns can be replaced — children cannot. All parents should tell their children about guns, that people may have them in their homes and that they are lethal weapons and not toys. Make sure that your child knows that a friend's family may allow things that you do not allow, such as touching real guns. If you are inclined, support gun control legislation in your state or community, particularly trigger locks and owner responsibility.

Community policing and adult volunteers: Families in all communities need to work together to ensure that children are safe and protected from harm. Community policing is a proven violence reducer. Effective neighborhood watch campaigns, "helping hands" and other community support programs enable children to play in a safe atmosphere. Volunteer in your community. Businesses can connect with their community through General Colin Powell's Army of Volunteers or other programs.

Parenting: Time pressures are great on working parents but you can develop routines. Children thrive on routines and structure. As parents, stick to your rules, provide structure and avoid showing physical, angry responses to everyday problems or frustrations. Corporal punishment is not effective. Model talking-it-out rather than striking out. Teach your children early on to calmly use words rather than fists. Spend 15 minutes a day in quiet conversation or play with your child, listening, commenting on what you observe, not lecturing. Starting early will pay off when your child goes through those sometimes painful, early adolescent transition years. Your modeling of verbal problem solving and thinking out loud can help your young child imitate verbal solutions. Never, never discount a child's worried, angry words or significant changes in sleeping, eating, motivation, school grades or other behaviors or friendships. If your child becomes very evasive, secretive and irritable, check it out and seek help. If your child shows a progression of poor anger control and threats of violence, don't respond with anger — get help from your family or religious advisor, school psychologist, counselor, pediatrician or others you trust. Be open when seeking help, and don't let others discount your worries.

Simple quick-fix solutions are not benign; they make real solutions harder to implement later. Poorly designed, graduated sanctions, solutions or punishments can result in some children graduating from violent words to violent actions. Be persistent in seeking help — your child's psychological health may be at stake. If your child talks about violent acts toward others, makes plans, writes plans or gathers materials that are dangerous, it may be only a matter of time before plans or words turn into violent actions. If your child asks you what to do about a friend that thinks violently, get help. We should never unknowingly be part of the conspiracy of silence. The same is true for drug abuse. If you know there are drug problems in your school or community and you do nothing because *your* child is not involved, you are part of the conspiracy of silence.

Drawing by Belinda Paige, 5th Grade

Influence your schools: Families and community leaders can support, encourage and participate in positive school climate programs, including those that support praise and respect for children. Find out what your school is doing to prevent classroom disruption, vulgar language, bullying, fighting and violence. We need instructional programs that teach problem solving and conflict resolution.

Parents can actively support a prosocial curriculum as part of all children's education, across all grades, starting in kindergarten. This is neither religion nor socialism. It means ensuring that all children are taught responsibility for their actions and caring for the safety and well-being of other children and adults. Parents should also insist that all school employees are responsible for a safe school environment, conducive to learning. Parents as consumers can insist on effective school leadership and teachers who are skilled and authoritative in their classrooms; parents should support and reward these professionals. Make sure that your school teaches the basics using proven instructional methods, not fads, and uses effective behavioral learning techniques. Make sure you and your schools teach children to *not* keep dangerous secrets friends tell them. Children need to know that through such secrets, their friends really are asking for help and they and the adults are the helpers.

Help bully-proof your schools. Support teaching children to "stop-and-think" before they act on impulse. Don't allow graffiti, petty thefts, extortion or classroom disruptions in your schools. Demand the discipline data and, with your school, use the data to solve problems and not to blame or condemn anyone. Research shows that tolerating disruptive behaviors will result in more aggression and a greater feeling, by children, that adults just don't care. This causes further alienation and a sense of hopelessness. Research shows that teaching children how to replace angry, aggressive behavior with thoughtful communication can very significantly reduce violence both in school and in the home. Research has also shown that professionally run in-school problem solving teams (with counselors and school psychologists) providing ongoing consultation to teachers can curb bullying, aggression and violence. These same teams can assist in crisis management when problems occur.

Families can join with religious leaders, Scouts, Boys & Girls Clubs, the police and others in supporting schools that teach responsibility and problem-solving skills. All should work to increase funding and resources for effective after-school programs to reinforce these skills. Volunteer to work in your schools, with your police or with these community groups.

Television and video games: Evaluate your child's exposure to television and video games. Use the rating system materials provided by the National PTA and the National Cable Television Association to help monitor your child's viewing. Limit the time your child spends watching television. You should contract with your child about what programs to watch. Throw away those violent video games and don't buy anymore. They brainwash your child to think violently and impulsively. They are conditioning your child to be reactive rather than reflective. Find alternatives to television that will encourage your child to be imaginative and active. Yes, organized sports are effective but that can, for some children, be another scheduled event for frustration or social embarrassment. Find your child's strengths and focus on those skills.

The Cure

Together we can turn this epidemic of violence around or we can tolerate the unnecessary toll on our children. Simple solutions alone, such as metal detectors or school uniforms, will not work. More expulsions, more jails and more punitive measures will not work and will only increase the hopelessness and mistrust of our public institutions. Failed solutions draw tax dollars away from effective prevention programs. Teaching children appropriate ways to communicate and behave begins very early, even before school. We must invest in effective child care and primary grade education.

Some children need more than skilled caring adults to teach them responsibility. No child can be thrown away. Communities must also support better child mental health services in our schools. Less than half of our schools provide any psychological services beyond diagnosis. Most children needing services are not diagnosed until they create a serious problem for themselves or others. Such children, unserved, drop out of school at a rate of 55%, five times greater than the national average. Untreated and uneducated, they fall into poverty. They may become parents to another generation of at-risk children. Communities can use innovative ways to pool funds and resources to better address such mental health problems. Coordinated services are possible if taxpayers support and demand them.

There is no vaccine for violence. It will take years to curb this epidemic. It took years for us to allow it to be created through the proliferation of guns, media violence and the destruction of the family. We have provided failed school and community solutions. We have taught our children that guns are for shooting human beings, that the trigger pulls the finger. Now it is time to teach each child to think before acting, to care about others, to use their words to problem solve, to kill no more. ♦

References

Batsche, G. & Knoff, H. (1994). Bullies and their victims: Understanding a pervasive problem in the schools. *School Psychology Review, 23*, 165-174.

Bear, G. (1998). School discipline in the United States: Prevention, correction, and long-term social development. *School Psychology Review, 27*, 15-32.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (1995). *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System - United States, 1993* (YRBSS). Atlanta: Author.

Poland, S. (1998, April 28). *Understanding violent children*. Testimony to the Early Childhood, Youth and Families Subcommittee, United States House of Representatives.

Skiba, R. & Peterson, R. (in press). The dark side of zero tolerance: Can punishment lead to safe schools? *Phi Delta Kappan*.

Turner, C.F., Ku, L., Rogers, S.M., Lindberg, L.D., Pleck, J.H., & Sonenstein, F.L. (1998, May 8). Adolescent sexual behavior, drug use, and violence: Increased reporting with computer survey technology. *Science, 280*: 867-873.

Kevin P. Dwyer, NCSP, is NASP President-Elect and past Assistant Executive Director. He was the principal investigator for the grant resulting in the government publication, Early Warning, Timely Response. *A short version of this article was published by* USA Today *in June 1998; excerpts were provided to DOE Secretary Richard Riley for use in his "Safe and Drug-Free Schools" speech last year. This article was previously published in the November 1998 issue of the* Communiqué *(volume 27, no. 3).*

School Crisis Planning: Questions Answered

by Scott Poland, NCSP
Chair, National Emergency Assistance Team

Does you school have a viable crisis plan? Is there a team with well-defined roles? Does every school staff member understand the plan? The best time to initiate or revamp your school's crisis plan is *now* — not in the middle of a crisis! This article provides answers to commonly asked questions about establishing school crisis teams and procedures.

How Do I Get Started?

A mandate for crisis planning is necessary from the top down. The school superintendent should hold building principals accountable for crisis planning and school safety. It is important that each school review any crises with which they have already dealt and consider these key questions:

- What worked well?
- What did not work?
- What did we learn?
- How can we prevent a crisis of this type in the future?

Crisis planning involves hard work and *there is no shortcut*. Many schools simply want to copy another school's plan or send out a listing of crisis team members. Each school needs to do the homework and spend time on crisis planning. Everyone needs to understand his/her role.

What Theoretical Model Should Guide Crisis Planning?

Using Caplan's model, there are three levels of crisis intervention:

- *Primary Prevention:* activities designed to prevent a crisis from occurring.
- *Secondary Prevention:* steps taken in the immediate aftermath of the crisis to minimize the effects.
- *Tertiary Prevention:* provides long-term follow-up to those most affected.

What Are the Leading Causes of Death for Children?

1. Accidents
2. Homicide
3. Suicide

Unfortunately, the annual death rate is 1 in 1,000 high school students, 1 in 3,000 junior high students and 1 in 4,000 elementary students. Emphasizing primary prevention activities means creating curriculum programs to address the leading causes of death, including programs in:

- Safe driving
- Bicycle safety
- Gun safety
- Decision-making
- Anger management
- Violence prevention
- Suicide prevention

Who Should be on a School Crisis Team?

Team members should have the desire to be on the crisis team and should possess personal characteristics such as remaining calm in a crisis and good speaking skills.

Should Every School Building Have its Own Crisis Team?

Every school should have key staff members who are involved in crisis planning. Three options in creating a crisis team include:

1. *Building Crisis Team* — There are many advantages if a building is large enough to have personnel such as nurses, counselors/ psychologists and security in addition to administrators. All building personnel are acquainted with each other, the student body and the community. Scheduling a meeting of the crisis team is not difficult. Building personnel may also work on primary prevention activities.
2. *District Team* — It may be necessary for key personnel such as security, counseling and nursing to come from another location in the school system with the purpose of supporting the building administrator. A disadvantage is that personnel may not be well acquainted and may be unaware of the specifics of the affected school.
3. *District/Community Team* — Key people such as law enforcement, medical and mental health personnel are not employees of the school system. Careful planning sessions are mandatory.

How Large Should a Crisis Team Be?

A minimum of four and maximum of eight members are needed. Key duties to be covered include: medical, counseling/psychological, security, parent communication and campus communication.

How Important is an Emergency Signal?

Every school must have a clear emergency signal that is understood by all staff. All school personnel must know the "lock down" procedures to insure student safety. School personnel should keep all students in a protected location until the building administrator gives an "all clear" signal or communication.

What Constitutes a Good Evacuation Plan?

All school personnel should know exactly where to direct students when an evacuation order is issued. Each school should make arrangements to use nearby neighborhood and community facilities for evacuation as much as possible. Additional suggestions:

- *Create an administrative crisis box* to take with you in the event of evacuation containing: a copy of emergency cards for each student and staff member, flashlights, bullhorns, portable phone, paper and writing instruments, crisis team badges and distinctive clothing such as a hat or vest to be worn by crisis team members.

- *Classroom teachers should create a classroom tote tray* containing activities to occupy students during a lengthy evacuation to a nearby facility. Small children (Pre-K to 1st grade) may need to bring items from home that would comfort them such as stuffed animals, family photos.
- *Secretarial staff should have supplies* such as bug spray, sunscreen and bottled water to be taken outside in the event of an evacuation.

Should I Evacuate School if a Bomb Threat is Called in?

Administrators make this decision based on these factors: age of caller, unrest in the community and weather conditions. Approximately 100 bombs of some type go off in schools each year. No data are available on the number of bomb threats received in the approximately 94,000 schools in the U.S. Some schools are requiring students to make up lost academic time from bomb threat evacuation by taking away scheduled holidays or by requiring students to do classwork while awaiting the signal to return to the school building. Close collaborative relations between local police and school administrators in all aspects of crisis planning are important, especially in bomb threat management procedures.

The school receptionist should have a standardized form to record time of day, background noises and voice characteristics of the person calling in the bomb threat. The caller should be asked logical questions about the type of bomb and when it is set to detonate.

What Must be Done First in the Aftermath of a Crisis?

The administrator/principal must take charge. Top priorities include assuring that medical and security needs are met and that identification information accompanies anyone who is injured/killed. Three waves of people will descend on the school and the building principal must delegate crisis team members to manage these three waves:

- Police and medical
- Media
- Parents

Address the Following Key Practical Questions:

- Do we close school early or cancel for the next day? (Hopefully not, as many students will be unsupervised at home.)
- Do we change the bell schedule and class schedule?
- How do we get facts about the crisis to parents, as well as information on how they can help their children? (Note sent home with students, schedule parent meeting, etc.)
- How do we isolate and support school personnel or students who are interviewed by police?
- How do we contain the media?

What are the Key Roles of Various School Personnel in Dealing with Large-Scale Emotionality?

Principal's Role in a Crisis:

- Direct the crisis team and take charge of the situation.
- Be visible, available, supportive.
- Dispel rumors by giving everyone the facts.
- Communicate with Central Administration and School Board.
- Contact family(ies) of the deceased.
- Provide updated information to all concerned.

Psychologist's / Counselor's/Social Worker's Role in a Crisis:

- Be available.
- Cancel other activities.
- Locate counseling space.
- Get counseling, secretarial assistance.
- Contact parents of affected students.
- Follow schedule of deceased student.
- Support the faculty.
- Contact feeder schools.

Teacher's Role in a Crisis:

- Provide accurate information to students.
- Lead class discussions.
- Dispel rumors.
- Answer questions.
- Model an appropriate response.
- Give permission for a range of emotions.
- Identify students who need counseling.
- Provide activities to reduce trauma and express emotions through artwork, music, writing.
- Set aside curriculum as needed.
- Discuss funeral procedures including customs and etiquette.
- Encourage parents to accompany their children to funerals.

Why are Crisis Drills Important?

Historically schools have had fire drills as frequently as once a month. It is obvious that fires are not the only, or the most common, crisis situation in the schools. By simply reading the newspaper, one can learn the types of crisis situations that have occurred in the schools. School crisis plans must be more than pages in a notebook gathering dust on a shelf. Crisis plans must be an ongoing, evolving part of conducting school. *Crisis drills make crisis plans come alive*, and schools learn from them! Suggestions for conducting crisis drills:

- Begin with paper and pencil discussion activities.
- Have crisis team anticipate five different school crisis situations.
- Each team member writes down duties that he/she would anticipate performing; the team discusses each scenario.
- Each semester, choose one scenario to act out.
- Inform parents of the importance of crisis drills in local media articles.
- Take precautions against unnecessarily alarming students, staff and parents.

Continued on page 8

■ School Crisis Planning... *from page 7*

- Inform parents, local agencies that drills are being conducted.
- Avoid using dramatic props such as starter pistols or simulated blood.
- Place a sign in the area designating that a crisis drill is being conducted.
- Practice drills that involve moving staff and students to a safe location.
- Crisis team should receive written and verbal feedback about the management of the crisis.

What are Recommendations from Schools that have Experienced Severe Crisis Situations?

- You must recognize that it could happen to you.
- No two crisis situations are alike, but what you learn in one situation will help you deal with future situations.
- Each person must understand his/her role in a crisis.
- School crisis plans must be reviewed at least once a year.
- Everyone must be alert.
- School safety is an inside job that involves a committed student body, staff and community.

What are the Key Points in Public Relations?

Before a crisis occurs, focus on school safety planning in parent newsletters. Create a school safety task force that involves the community, parents, students and teachers. When a crisis occurs, it is important to:

- Mobilize quickly.
- Involve top administrators who go to the scene.
- Show concern to all.
- Share information.

How Can We Manage the Media?

- Establish positive relationships with local media.
- Select and train a media spokesperson for each building or district.
- Write a media policy that clarifies what the media will and will not be allowed to do.
- The policy should be a cooperative one that sets limits such as no roaming halls or filming grieving students.
- Avoid refusing to cooperate with the media and be prepared to use your authority to ban them from campus if it becomes necessary. The excessive numbers of media personnel sent to Jonesboro, Arkansas, for instance, necessitated banning the media from school grounds.
- Recognize that you can utilize the media to dispense important information regarding community assistance.
- Emphasize preparatory actions taken by your district and the support being provided to staff and students.
- Grant reasonable interview requests.
- Clarify media procedures to all school staff.
- Designate a certain room to receive media representatives. The central office may be the best location.
- Central office personnel may need to manage media requests so that the building principal can attend to other duties.
- Provide a written statement supporting and clarifying verbal statements.
- Obtain parent permission prior to releasing any student photographs.
- Prior to releasing student's name to media, notify his/her family.

How Can Schools Improve Their Communication Systems?

- Have necessary equipment on hand: private phone line, portable or cellular phones, fax machines, computers, bullhorns and two-way radios.
- Modernize intercoms so that each classroom can communicate with the office and vice versa.
- Communicate with portable buildings, playgrounds via outside speakers.
- Have clear emergency signal that is understood by everyone. Clarify, simplify and rehearse the emergency signal.

But What if I Don't Have an Intercom or a Phone in My Classroom?

Each teacher should designate a responsible student and train him/her how to get assistance in an emergency. The teacher has his/her name on a *key ring in red and in blue*. If there is a medical emergency, the teacher tears off the red tag that has the teacher's name on it and sends it with the responsible student for help. The blue tag means behavioral or safety emergency that requires administrative assistance. This process should be rehearsed.

How Do Children Typically Respond to a Crisis or Disaster?

Their responses fall into four main categories:

- Fear of the future
- Behavioral regression
- Academic regression
- Nightmares and/or night terrors

How Can We Help Children After a Tragedy?

It is important to give them the facts in age-appropriate terms and to give them permission for a range of emotions. Every child has a story to tell and we need to listen and answer questions. The National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) Model of Group Crisis Intervention has many applications for use in the schools. Each student and teacher in a classroom sits in a circle and the facilitator begins by asking sensory perception questions, thus guiding students to a discussion of emotions, prediction of the future and identification of coping

Continued on page 9

Memorials: Guidelines for Educators and Communities

by Cathy Paine
Springfield (OR) Public Schools

School memorials or memory activities serve an important function in the grief process for students and staff. A memorial promotes the healing process by providing an opportunity for students to join together and participate in a ritual. The memorial may take many forms, from a simple tree planting to a more traditional "service." In addition, a school memorial brings closure to a period of grieving and serves as a clear statement that it is time to move on with regular school activities. Memorials should be planned carefully considering the following guidelines:

Memorial Services

- Keep the memorial short. Fifteen to twenty minutes for elementary students; thirty to forty minutes for secondary.
- Involve students in the planning of the memorial, particularly those who were close to the deceased.
- Include music, particularly student performances. Also, play soothing music as people enter to set the mood and maintain calm (particularly important at the middle school level).
- Preview the service with students beforehand. This is not a normal assembly, so prepare students as to what will happen and how they should behave. (Remove anyone from the service who is acting inappropriately.)
- Have several brief speakers. If students have written poems or other tributes, students themselves or staff can read samples. Practice, practice, practice.
- Invite family members. However, recognize that they may choose not to come.
- Involve all students as much as possible. To the extent that is appropriate for their age, have each class make a poster or banner that they bring to the memorial and hang on the wall.
- Use symbols of life and hope. Balloons or candles can be used very effectively to promote a positive, uplifting message that acknowledges the sadness yet is hopeful for the future.
- Have all students and staff attend (unless a parent has a specific objection). It is a powerfully unifying experience for a school, and it sends a message to students that each person is important in the school and deserves to be honored.
- Provide a quiet activity for students who do not attend, or dismiss them.
- Have students return to their classrooms for a short time after the service. This allows them the opportunity to talk with one another and/or talk with a counselor. "Support" rooms work well for students who are experiencing more significant signs of grief.
- If the death was due to suicide, a public memorial is not advised.
- Plan the activity to occur within a week of the death if possible.

Permanent Memorials

- Do not rush into the completion of a permanent memorial. Time and emotional distance from the incident often brings insight into the design.
- Students should be involved in the planning and design of the memorial, and it is important to establish who will make the final decision. Define the roles of students, staff, administrators, parents and community members in the process.
- Carefully consider the location of any permanent memorial. It should be placed in a location where students can choose to look at it but it should not confront the students every time they enter the school. (Advice of Dr. Robert Pynoos, Director of Trauma Psychiatry Services at UCLA.) ♦

Resource

Young, M. (1998). *Community crisis response training manual.* Washington, DC: National Organization of Victim Assistance.

Cathy Paine is a school psychologist in the Springfield, OR Schools who worked with the NOVA/NEAT Team following the Thurston High School shootings in May 1998. This article was previously published in the November 1998 issue of the Communiqué *(volume 27, no. 3).*

■ School Crisis Planning... *from page 8*

skills. Additional information on this model, with which many school psychologists are familiar, is available at 1-800-TRY-NOVA. It is also very important that students have the opportunity to express emotions through artwork, music and writing. Meetings between school staff and parents are important to help them understand the typical reactions of children and to provide the adults with guidance to help the children. ♦

Resources

Poland, S., Pitcher, G. & Lazarus, P. (1995). Best practices in crisis intervention. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology-III* (pp.445-458). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Young, M. (1998). *Community crisis response training manual.* Washington, DC: National Organization of Victim Assistance.

Scott Poland is the Chairman of the National Emergency Assistance Team for NASP. He led the NOVA national crisis teams in Paducah, Kentucky and Jonesboro, Arkansas following school shootings. He recently published School Violence: Lessons Learned *(1998, Sopris West). This article was previously published in the November 1998 issue of the* Communiqué *(volume 27, no. 3).*

Death: Dealing with Crisis at School

Practical Suggestions for Educators

Adapted from the Departments of Psychological Services, Counseling and Student Support Services, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, Houston, TX

Background

National statistics indicate that approximately one out of every 1500-2000 students die or is killed each year, with the incidence of deaths being highest for the high school population. The most frequent causes of student deaths are accidents, homicide and suicides. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) statistics from 1994 indicated the following causes of deaths among young people under age twenty:

4000 motor vehicle deaths

4000 homicides

3800 suicides

The CDC statistics also indicate that approximately 50 homicides or suicides happened on school grounds or on the way to school in 1995.

Unfortunately, at some time all educators will deal with the death of a student or colleague. It is then essential that school personnel prepare *in advance* so that they can respond in a timely and supportive manner that leads to constructive resolution for all students and staff.

Notification and Announcement Procedures

- **Get the facts!** Verification is very important and administrators should contact the family of the deceased and/or authorities to get the facts before providing postvention. Give everyone the facts as quickly as possible to dispel rumors. Please verify that the student or staff member is deceased and not being maintained on life support systems. Age-appropriate language should be used. Acceptable sources of verification are: 1) School personnel who witnessed the death notification from the family of the deceased. 2) Notification from law enforcement agency.

- **Get help!** Contact the key district administrators for assistance, and do so as quickly as possible. The administrators will also be helpful in interacting with the media. If the death was a suicide, it is essential that central administrators have input into postvention planning.

- **Establish a calling tree:** A calling tree should be utilized to notify district level personnel as well as building staff in the location where the deceased attended or worked. The calling tree can be used to notify all school personnel that a faculty meeting will be held before school to outline postvention plans. If the death occurs during non-school hours or during vacations, this process allows staff members to work through their own issues before they assist their students.

If a Death Occurs When School is in Session:

1) **Hand deliver a memorandum to all teachers.** The most frequent recommendation is to give all teachers the facts about the tragedy and instructions to share the information with their students, as well as suggestions for assisting students. This memo can also invite all staff to a faculty meeting after school. The majority of students should stay in their classroom. Only those closest to the victim or those with tragic life situations of their own should be sent to the school's support personnel.

2) **Use the public announcement system.** The administrator is urged to carefully plan and rehearse what he will say. Choice of words, voice tone and inflection are very important and set the tone for management of the tragedy.

Parent Notification

It is very important to inform the parents of students at the school affected by the death that a death has occurred. There is a balance between providing enough information to dispel rumors and protecting the privacy of the deceased. It is recommended that a fact sheet or letter be sent to parents, either by mail or sent home via students. This letter, in most cases, *would not* contain the name of the deceased, especially when the death involves a student. The name would be used in communications within the school to the faculty, and in most cases with the students. The letter sent home would contain a brief description of the cause of death when the facts are known, but would avoid unnecessary details.

School personnel, especially those who have direct contact with parents either by phone or in person, should be given specific directions about appropriate information to share regarding the death. The letter to parents should encourage them to focus on the needs of their child and not on specific information about the deceased. The letter should clarify what types of services are available at school to help their child cope with the tragedy. This letter should be reviewed by the superintendent or his designee prior to distribution.

Determine the Degree of Trauma

The following questions will help the administrator anticipate the amount of emotional trauma:

- Who was the person and were they a long-time popular member of the school?

- What happened? Murder and suicide are unexpected and violent, and thus more difficult to deal with than, for example, a death from a serious illness.

- Where did the death occur? A death that occurs on school grounds is more difficult to deal with. It is important to find out who witnessed the death and provide them with counseling. Students may also reflect concerns with personal safety.

- What other tragedies have impacted this particular school recently? The latest death will cause other unresolved issues to surface for both staff and students.

- Who was the perpetrator? If the person believed to be responsible for the death is also a member of your school community, it adds to the emotionality.

Roles for School Personnel

There are a number of roles that should be performed by key personnel. It is important to recognize that each person has his or her own unique history with regard to crisis and loss. It is not unusual for old issues to resurface. Each student should be given permission to feel a range of emotions. There is no right or wrong way to feel. Typically, individuals go through a sequence of emotional reactions following a crisis: 1) high anxiety, 2) denial, 3) anger, 4) remorse, 5) grief and 6) reconciliation.

Principal's Role

- Direct intervention efforts
- Be visible, available, supportive and empower staff
- Provide direction to teachers about how much to set aside the curriculum. Tests should be postponed in some classes.
- Communicate with central administration and other affected schools
- Contact family of the deceased
- Inform staff and students about funeral arrangements
- Ensure that memorials are appropriate

Counselor's/School Psychologist's/Social Worker's Role

- Be available
- Cancel other activities
- Locate counseling assistance (check community resources)
- Provide individual and group counseling
- Contact parents of affected students with suggestions for support or further referral
- Follow the schedule of the deceased and visit classrooms of close friends
- Support the faculty (provide counseling as needed)
- Keep records of affected students and provide follow-up services

Teachers' Role

- Provide accurate information to students
- Lead classroom discussions that focus on helping students to cope with the loss
- Dispel rumors
- Answer questions without providing unnecessary details
- Recognize the varying religious beliefs held by students
- Model an appropriate response
- Give permission for a range of emotions
- Identify students who need counseling and refer to building support personnel
- Provide activities to reduce trauma, such as artwork, music and writing
- Set aside the curriculum as needed
- Discuss funeral procedures

What if the Death was a Suicide?

If the death was a suicide, post-vention procedures outlined by the American Association of Suicidology (AAS) should be followed, in addition to the recommendations above. The tasks of post-vention are twofold: 1) to reduce the chances of anyone else committing suicide by avoiding glamorization of the deceased and 2) to assist staff and students with the grieving process. Post-vention activities provide an opportunity to teach students the warning signs of suicide so that further suicides can be prevented. It is also important that school personnel receive training to recognize symptoms of depression and warnings of suicide ideation among students well before a crisis occurs. The main recommendations of the AAS include the following:

- Don't dismiss school or encourage funeral attendance during school hours
- Don't dedicate a memorial to the deceased
- Don't have a large school assembly
- Do give the facts to the students
- Do emphasize prevention and everyone's role
- Do provide individual and group counseling
- Do emphasize that no one is to blame for the suicide
- Do emphasize that help is available and that there are alternatives to suicide
- Do contact the family of the deceased ♦

Resources

American Association of Suicidology, Suite 310, 4201 Connecticut Av NW, Washington, DC 20008.

Dwyer, K., Osher, D., & Warger, C. (1998). *Early Warning, Timely Response; A Guide to Safe Schools*. U.S. Department of Education.

National Association of School Psychologists, National Emergency Assistance Team (NEAT), 4340 East-West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814 (301) 657-0270. Web Site: <*http://www.naspweb.org*>

National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA), 1757 Park Road, Washington, D.C. 20010; 1-800-TRY-NOVA.

Poland, S. (1997). School crisis teams. In A. Goldstein & J. Conoley (Eds.), *School violence intervention handbook*. New York: Guilford Press.

Poland, S. (1989). *Suicide intervention in the school*. New York: Guilford Press.

Poland, S.(1999). *School violence: Lessons learned*. Longmont, Colorado: Sopris West

— *Updated from a handout published in* Helping Children at Home and School: Handouts from your School Psychologist *(NASP, 1998).*

Disaster: Helping Children Cope

by Debby Waddell, Ph.D., NCSP, Columbus, OH
and Alex Thomas, Ph.D., NCSP, Miami University (OH)

Background

Disasters can take many forms. They may weather-related, as in tornadoes, hurricanes or floods; accident-related, as in bus or automobile deaths or drowning; illness-related as in AIDS, cancer, or other deaths due to illness; or bizarre and unusual, as in the case of snipers or a murder.

Pre-planning can be done for some of these disasters, as when a death from cancer is anticipated or when weather forecasts warn of hurricanes. Others may be sudden and allow no time for pre-planning. Yet another variable is whether the disaster occurs at school, such as a suicide in the school or tornado during school hours, or outside of school hours, such as a hurricane or automobile accident. All of these factors will undoubtedly affect the specific response to the disasters, but some common elements can be found in responses to all of these situations.

Teachers have two essential jobs in the aftermath of disasters: First, to make plans for the practical aspects of how the disaster will be handled in their own classroom and second, to understand and cope with student reactions. The first of these responsibilities will likely be shared with other building personnel, but each teacher will have to structure the response within his/her own classroom. The second responsibility, coping with student reactions, again will be shared, this time with the parents and individuals such as school psychologist, school counselor or an outside mental health professional. The ongoing need to deal with student reactions during the school day, however, will fall on individual teachers. Determining appropriate steps to be taken immediately upon experiencing a disaster and deciding what to do in the days and weeks that follow is crucial.

Student Reactions to Disaster

Common emotional reactions: Emotional reactions vary in nature and severity from student to student. Children's reactions to a disaster are determined by their previous experiences, their temperament and personality, and the immediacy of the disaster to their own lives. Nonetheless, some commonalities exist in how students (and school staff) feel when their lives are disrupted by a disaster.

- *Loss of Control:* By their very nature, disasters are something over which we have no control — if we did, we would stop them from happening. The feeling of loss of control can be overwhelming.

- *Loss of Stability:* Disasters also interrupt the natural order of things. Stability is gone and this is very threatening; it can destroy trust and upset equilibrium for extended periods. After all, if this disaster could happen, then most anything else might happen too.

- *Self-centered Reactions:* Children's immediate reaction to disaster often includes a fear for their own safety. They may be intensely worried about what will happen to them, to an extent that adults think is unreasonable. However, young children have difficulty putting the needs of others before their own. Children need repeated reassurance regarding their own safety and the outcome of the disaster as it relates to them.

Common stress symptoms: Following a disaster or traumatic crisis event, students — like adults — will likely exhibit at least several typical symptoms of stress, reflecting their emotional reactions and sense of loss. Symptoms tend to vary with the age and developmental maturity of the child. If symptoms persist for a long time or seem extreme, teachers should consult their building mental health staff (school psychologist, counselor, social worker) and discuss concerns with parents. Professional help through the school or community healthcare provider might be needed, At different ages, teachers might observe:

- *Elementary school children:* irritability, aggressiveness, clinginess , school avoidance, poor concentration, withdrawl from activities and friends, increased conflict with peers. Parents might report concerns about sleeping difficulties, including nightmares.

- *Young adolescents:* poor school performance, physical complaints (headache, stomachache), withdrawl from friends. Parents might report concerns about sleep disturbance, loss of appetite and conflict between parent and child.

- *Older adolescents:* agitation, lack of energy, lessened interest in peers, physical complaints (headache, stomachache), poor concentration, irresponsible or delinquent behavior. Parents might report concerns regarding sleeping and eating disturbances.

What Can Teachers Do? Immediate Responses

Inform students of the disaster: Typically some school-wide decision is made regarding notification of staff and students. Often the PA system or a message to all teachers is used so the same information is given to everyone at the same time and the spread of rumors is controlled. A death or other intimate event may require a more personal method of imparting information.
A teacher's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that the information your students receive is appropriate to their developmental level and is stated in vocabulary they can understand. You may need to restate information in several ways so that every student understands.

- Controlling panic among your students. Your calm demeanor and take-charge attitude can do much to control panic. It is okay for students to know that you are upset, for instance by shedding tears over a death. While it will be natural for you to experience emotion, it is important to students that you maintain composure and control of the situation.

Decide about scheduling changes: Decisions about scheduling changes may be made by administrators. However you will have to make decisions about what is to happen in your classroom.

- Generally, returning to a normal routine is appropriate.

- If students seem very unsettled, returning to a normal routine may not be the best choice. Possible immediate responses to disaster include discussing what has happened, clarifying information and facts, and listening carefully.

Intermediate Steps for Crisis Control

Arrange support and counseling for students: Building administrators will probably have made arrangements for support services. Your job is to know how, where, and when to access these services and to channel students in need of these services to the appropriate individuals.

Children particularly affected by the disaster should be carefully observed. They may require extra support and assistance.

Continue to have group discussion time at the beginning of the day. This may be useful in clearing the air of rumors and helping the students get ready for school work.

Plan a practical concrete activity to help student deal with feelings: Involve students in decisions about what to do to help restore their sense of having control in their lives. Possible activities include:

- Collective money for disaster victims.
- Planting a tree as a memorial for a death.
- Designing cards and writing notes to someone involved in the disaster.
- Drawing pictures and putting up a bulletin board.
- Writing poems or stories for a class book about the disaster.

Inform parents about how their children are reacting and what is being done in the classroom to deal with the disaster. A handwritten, dittoed note will suffice in this situation.

Decide how to handle attending funeral or memorial services if the disaster involves deaths. Whenever possible, have parents take their own children to services. If necessary, arrange transportation for a student to a memorial service. If you will be teaching during the service, a parent or another staff member may take the student. (Permission slips may be needed.) The person chosen should be prepared to deal with the student's emotional reaction to the service.

Provide information about the funeral and its structure to prepare the students for the experience. Students who aren't going may still want to know what will happen. For young children, this may be their first experience with death, and information may be especially important for them.

Allow for the fatigue which children may experience due to stress and changed sleep patterns.

- Plan for less intense instructional activities for a few days.
- Introduce snack time for a few days to provide extra nourishment which tired children may need. Room parents or the PTA/PTO may be willing to provide snacks.
- Delay tests which will allow fair evaluation of student performance after stress levels are reduced.

Long-term and Ongoing Intervention

Provide ongoing opportunities to deal with the crisis:

- Let students know there continue to be people available who are willing to listen. Tell them who is available and when and where to find these people.
- Discuss feelings with the entire class or individual children who feel most affected.
- Discuss the disaster in the context of other subjects, e.g. discuss suicide prevention in a junior high health class, discuss weather-related disasters in elementary social studies class.

Provide facts to help allay fears: For instance, if a classmate dies of cancer, facts about prevalence and cures may help students who are fearful when they feel unwell.

Think ahead to effects which might be delayed: For instance:

- Be aware that similar incidents in another location may trigger renewed feelings.
- Plan a special remembrance for the one-year anniversary of the disaster, thereby diverting renewed reaction if the anniversary date is ignored.

Listen and watch for long-term reactions:

- Prepare for long-term reactions which are normal, such as the continued need to discuss a hurricane or shooting.
- Watch for pathological long-term reactions. Pathological long-term reactions are more severe than those experienced by most children and might include (1) persistent reexperiencing of the traumatic event through intense recollections, dreams, flashbacks or hallucinations; (2) persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma or numbing of responsiveness, such as restricted affect, diminished interest in usual activities; or (3) signs of increased arousal, such as sleep difficulties, irritability, hypervigilance, disturbances in concentration, exaggerated startle response.

Find ways to emphasize a return to stability: When the disaster abates, return to previous schedules and maintain these for a time, even if some change in routine was planned, in order to provide a sense of security and comfort. ♦

Resources

Brooks, B. & Seigel, P. (1996). *The scared child: Helping kids overcome traumatic events.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Pitcher, G. & Poland, S. (1992). *Crisis intervention in the schools.* New York: Guilford Press.

Robinson, E., Rotter, J., Fey. M. & Vogel, K. (1992). *Helping children cope with fears and stress.* ERIC/CAPS (ERIC Counseling and Professional Services Clearing House).

Published in Helping Children at Home and School: Handouts from your School Psychologist *(NASP, 1998).*

Cultural Perspectives on Trauma and Critical Response

Adapted by Kris Sieckert, NCSP
Oconomowoc (WI) Schools
Central Region NEAT Facilitator

This article is a condensed version of Chapter 7 of the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) Community Response Team Training Manual. It was written by Kris Sieckert with the permission of Dr. Marlene Young, NOVA Executive Director.

Using the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* to define culture, we find the following: "The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, be-liefs, institutions and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population." In other words, cultures are a means for sharing wisdom and skills that are necessary to the survival of the community, the individual and the community area of humanity. Therefore, our culture shapes how we identify and interpret the threat of traumatic events and how we manifest our distress in response to these events.

Cultural Identities

It is important that crisis responders attempt to understand their own cultural identities as they reach out to serve others. NOVA identifies the following as sources of cultural identities:

- Nationality
- Religion
- Income
- Age
- Education
- Sexual Orientation
- Rural/Urban
- Mental/Physical Abilities
- Gender
- Profession
- Ethnicity
- "Location in Life"

NOVA also identifies the following concepts and attitudes shaped by culture:

- Birth
- Communitarianism
- Marriage
- Ambition
- Death
- Acquisitions
- Male/Female
- Power
- Language/Dialect
- Wealth
- Spirituality
- Children
- Individualism
- Elderly
- Homosexuality
- Dress
- "Differentness"

Crisis responders are encouraged to use the lists to identify important sources of cultural identity in their lives, to initially access the cultural backgrounds of individual victims or groups they serve, and to find significant commonalities in order to establish a basis of communication.

Interpreting Traumatic Events

Culture influences what type of threat is perceived as traumatic and how we interpret the meaning of the traumatic event. Culture also influences how individuals and communities express traumatic reactions. While reactions to trauma seem to be common throughout all cultures and based in the physiology of human beings, manifestations of responses may differ significantly. Culture forms a context through which the traumatized individuals or communities view and judge their own response. If people think that the society around them will not accept them as victims, there is a tendency to withdraw and be silent. Culture may affect the response of immediately "non-traumatized to trauma" and the traumatized. This is a critical issue for many people who are victims. Their own culture or the culture in which they exist may reject or stigmatize them and may be perceived as an additional injury. Cultures may help define healthy pathways to new lives after trauma. The routines and traditions may aid survivors of a tragedy in feeling re-oriented or rendering life predictable.

Trauma and culture are particularly complicated today. Multiple identifications require complex reasoning for negotiating the environment. With an increase in life stress and a decrease in the capacity to screen and moderate the impact of a trauma, cultural traumas can be transmitted across time and generation as a bond for survival.

Accommodating and Integrating Cultural Standards

Prior to cross-cultural work, education is needed about a culture's routines, traditions and impact of family relationships. Be prepared to accommodate and integrate such cultural standards into crisis response work. Attention should be paid to the following issues:

- Geography, climate and environment
- History of a culture
- Language of culture
- Routines and rituals of culture

No matter what the preconditions to introduction to other cultures, caregivers should be prepared to convey respect and good will:

- Say "Hello" and request the opportunity to talk with people.
- Acknowledge differences and apologize for discrepancies between your behaviors and the people with whom you are talking.
- Be aware of your own cultural biases and try to be non-judgmental with those with whom you interact.
- Always say "please" and "thank you" when appropriate; always request permission to do things.

Protocol for Crisis Work Across Cultures

Orientation to caregiving interventions:

- Participate in access rituals. These often involve ceremony, food and expressions of good will.

- Explain purpose of intervention and the need for reciprocal questions. Many cultures find questions intrusive. Yet, for the caregiver, they may be essential in the establishment of understanding. Questions and answers are often the only way to clarify differences in language, customs and unconscious behaviors.
- Express an appreciation and respect for the culture's strengths in coping with trauma. Every culture has means to deal with trauma and can explain those means. Their understanding of trauma and its implications is inherent in their eventual integration of a tragedy into their lives.
- Express a willingness to learn about the ethnic group involved. One method to convey this is to ask, "If I were a victim of this trauma, how would you expect me to deal with it?"
- Acknowledge your limitations and differences. These may include the inability to speak or understand the language, confusion over certain customs or rituals or spiritual understandings.
- Establish your competence in understanding trauma's impact whether or not you understand the traumatic impact of an event or the meaning of that impact.

Practical Problems:

- Deal with immediate environmental problems such as financial loss, secure shelter, family conflict, etc. that the individual is having difficulty handling by himself.
- Build trust.
- Assist the survivors or victims with financial resources or compensation, if possible.
- Help the survivors focus on something tangible that they can accomplish over the next few days.

Crisis Intervention with Cultural Focus:

- Search for the meaning of suffering and pain relevant to the dominant cultural group involved.
- Search for the meaning of death in the culture.
- Search for the meaning of life in the culture.
- Make an effort to acknowledge your limitations with language or other communication concerns, and ask the survivors to tell you if you say something wrong or do something offensive.
- Ask survivors to tell their story and talk to them about the crisis reaction.
- Ask survivors if their families should be present during discussions or if they would like to have clergy members present.
- Ask survivors if they would like to go to a place of worship or if there are any ceremonies or rituals that are particularly directed at crisis in their culture.
- Ask survivors to describe what they would like you to do to be of assistance to them and then tell them truthfully what you can or can't do.
- Useful cross-cultural interventions include: reduction of isolation, relaxation techniques, meditation, education about crisis in culturally relevant terms, helping individuals to develop control, increase self-esteem and self-regulation.
- Be aware of culturally specific communication techniques such as the use of eye contact, the integration of food and drink in discussions, the pace of conversation, body language and so forth.

Hints for Helping:

- Dress appropriately: Men should wear suits and women should wear dresses in most cultures. An outside team of crisis responders may convey their respects through respectful clothes.
- Establish commonality with survivors through access rituals and mutual interests: Eat what is offered; drink what is offered. Ask about family, friends, pets, plants and loved ones.
- Search for linguistic equivalency even if you do not know the language of the culture.
- Greet and say good-bye to survivors in their own language.
- Allow survivors to direct you through cultural protocols and follow their directions.
- Participate in defined ritual, as allowed or requested.
- Apologize when you do something wrong.
- Clearly define your objectives and give references of specific other situations that are similar to this one in which you were helpful.
- Find out and use appropriate body language.
- Bring a gift of commemoration.
- Be aware of spiritual beliefs in the culture.
- Ensure that written communications are either in the appropriate language or are linguistically and structurally correct to facilitate translation. ♦

Resource

Young, M. (1998). *Community response team training manual* (second edition). NOVA: Washington, DC.

Kris Sieckert, NCSP, is a school psychologist in Oconomowoc, WI and Central Region Facilitator for NASP/NEAT. She worked with the NOVA/NEAT Team in Springfield, OR after the school shootings there in May 1998. This article was previously published in the November 1998 issue of Communiqué *(volume 27, no. 3).*

Disasters: Developing A Crisis Response Plan

Guidelines for School Personnel

by Debby Waddell, Ph.D., NCSP, Columbus, OH
and Alex Thomas, Ph.D., NCSP, Miami University (OH)

Background

Disasters can take many forms. They may be weather-related, as in tornadoes, hurricanes, or floods;accident-related, as in bus or automobile deaths or drowning; illness-related as in AIDS, cancer or other deaths due to illness, or bizarre and unusual, as in the case of snipers or a murder. For some of these disasters, pre-planning can be done, i.e., when death from cancer is anticipated or when weather forecasts warn of hurricanes. Others may be sudden and allow no time for pre-planning. Yet another variable is whether the disaster occurs at school (i.e., a suicide in the school or a tornado during school hours) or outside of school hours (i.e., weekend hurricane or automobile accident). All of these factors will undoubtedly affect the specific response to the disasters, but some common elements can be found in all of these situations.

Formulating a Disaster Plan

When disaster strikes, teachers and school staff members immediately need to be ready to cope with their reactions and the reactions of their students. The need to deal with student reactions comes at a time when staff members are still dealing with their own reaction and may be least prepared to think quickly and cope with others' reactions. Nonetheless, this must be done. With some advance planning, this process can be much smoother than if disaster takes you by surprise and no pre-formulated plan is in effect. Once a plan is in effect, adjustments can be made quickly to deal with the specific nature of the current crisis. When formulating a disaster plan, the following ideas may be helpful:

- Determine if your district is small enough to have a single crisis team or if separate building teams are needed, with an umbrella district team for times of widespread disaster.

Continued on page 17

Childhood Responses to Trauma

Adapted by Ted Feinberg, Ph.D., NCSP
North Colonie Schools (NY)
Northeast Region NEAT Facilitator

Feelings and Symptoms

The National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder suggests that children who go through traumatic episodes may show a variety of psychological problems, including:

- poor peer relationships
- strained relationships within the family
- low self-esteem
- decrease in school activities and performance
- sexualized behavior (in cases of sexual abuse)
- delayed emotional development
- depression and anger
- decline in physical health
- substance abuse
- fears
- anger
- guilt
- feeling ashamed
- disturbing memories or flashbacks
- repeated nightmares and dreams of death
- belief in omens and prediction of disastrous future events
- pessimism about the future and expectation of early death
- avoiding reminders of traumatic experiences
- fear of re-experiencing traumatic anxiety
- behavioral re-enactment (expressed as repetitive play)
- emotional numbness (seeming to have no feelings, except perhaps anger)
- diminished interest in significant activities
- physical symptoms, such as stomachaches and headaches
- feeling constantly on guard, nervous and jumpy

Surviving or witnessing traumatic events may intensify symptoms of other pre-existing disorders, such as:

- attention disorders (ADD, ADHD)
- oppositional defiant disorder
- dissociative disorders
- panic disorder
- eating disorders
- phobias
- major depression
- separation anxiety disorder ♦

Resources

Brooks,B. & Siegel, P. (1996). *The scared child: Helping kids overcome traumatic events*. New York: Wiley.

Monahan, C. (1993). *Children and trauma: A parents' guide to helping children heal*. New York: Lexington Books.

Webb, N. (1993). *Help for bereaved children: A handbook for practitioners*. New York: Guilford.

— *Previously published in the November 1998 issue of the* Communiqué *(volume 27, no. 3).*

■ Crisis Response Plan... *from page 16*

- Team members should be selected on the basis of each member's expertise.
- Designate a team leader.
- Designate the disaster team or teams. This will likely include administrators, school psychologists, counselors, and other staff members without responsibility for individual classrooms.
- Designate an individual who will deal with the media. This is very important.
- Plan ways of using community resources and network with these agencies or individuals in advance. Potential resources include mental health agency personnel and clergy with special training in counseling.
- Prepare for weekend or after-hours meetings of disaster teams and coordinators, perhaps setting up a phone-tree for quick notification. Be sure to check contract language prior to requiring after-hours involvement, where necessary.
- Determine how PTO/PTA leaders might bring meals for staff members working late into the evening or arrange child care for staff members' children to free them for disaster team efforts.

All staff members should be aware of the disaster plan. Not only teachers, but clerical staff, aides, bus drivers, and maintenance staff need to be apprised of the plan. Including staff members in planning and sharing the plan at a district inservice day or teacher meeting allows time for discussion when stress and pressure are minimal. Another task that can be done in advance of disaster is preparing information on typical reactions to disasters and planning ways for distribution of such information. The teacher and parent handouts accompanying this information are designed for just such purposes. Pairing these handouts with one detailing events and resources in your community is suggested. Such a handout might include:

- Specific, factual information about the event
- Details about how the district is handling the crisis
- Information about contact people within the district including phone numbers
- Information about community resources including phone numbers
- Titles of books pertinent to disasters as well as books dealing with feelings. Ask librarians to use the bookfinder to prepare a list of such books available in your library (school and public) for a variety of topics (death, tornadoes, children and serious illness, etc.). This will facilitate quick access if the list is needed. Preparing such a list may suggest topic areas in which your libraries are weak and allow time for ordering additional materials.

Components of Effective Disaster Plans

Disaster plans can include steps to be taken immediately upon learning of a disaster as well as longer-term plans. The following items might be included:

Immediate Reaction to Disaster

- Determine how staff members and students will learn of the disaster. Provide accurate information to all concerned at approximately the same time to help control the spread of rumors. The PA system or messages to teachers might be used, depending on the nature of the disaster. A death or other intimate disaster may require a more personal manner of imparting information.
- Notify staff members in advance if time allows. Word of a death occurring over a weekend can be spread by phone or at an early-morning staff meeting.
- Target certain parents for special notification. For instance, if a member of an athletic team is killed, phoning parents of other team members might be indicated.
- Decide about scheduling changes: Decide whether to maintain normal schedules or set aside regular scheduling in an all-out effort to deal with the crisis. Obviously this decision will depend on the extent of the crisis and might even vary from grade to grade and from class to class. For instance, if a sophomore commits suicide, that class will probably need more assistance than the senior class. A most important step in any disaster is reopening the school and returning to a normal routine as soon as possible.
- Formulate plans for school dismissal: Typically keeping children in school for the regular school day is best when dealing with disaster. However, if early dismissal is required, parent notification becomes an item of priority.
- There may be occasions when an extended school day is necessary. For instance, if a shooting has occurred and the gunman/women is at large and most of the students walk home from school, dismissing students would be hazardous.
- Plans may need to be made for shielding children and staff from the media. Cordoning children as they are loaded into school buses may prove to be very effective for this purpose.

Intermediate Steps for Crisis Control

- Provide support and counseling for students. Regular instruction will probably need to be suspended while the disaster is discussed. Individuals trained in counseling might target classrooms for their most immediate services where children are most severely affected. Teachers need to know how to get assistance from another professional quickly should the need arise.
- Disseminate factual information about the crisis to parents. The most effective method of providing factual information to parents may be to prepare a letter to be sent home. Some parents may need to be contacted by phone, especially if their child's reaction to the disaster seems extreme.
- Decide how to deal with funerals or memorial services if death(s) are involved in the disaster. When possible, have parents take their own children to the services. If parents are unable to go, staff members may volunteer to do this. Permission slips may be needed. Successful suicides should not be treated as honored heroes in school assemblies and funeral attendance should, in most cases, be only with parents accompanying the children. At times, school buses

Continued on page 18

Student Violence: Warning Signs

Students At Risk for Violent Behavior:

- History of being violent toward his/her peers
- Access to firearms
- Involved in drinking alcohol or taking other drugs
- Caregivers have a history of drug/alcohol involvement
- Peer group reinforces antisocial behaviors
- Learned attitudes accepting aggressive behaviors as "normal" and an effective way to solve problems
- High level of violence in the home, in the neighborhood and in the media
- School history that includes aggressive and disruptive classroom behavior
- Poor school achievement, poor school attendance and numerous school suspensions
- Difficulty with social skills and poor peer relations
- Difficulty controlling his/her impulses and emotions
- History of parental rejection, inconsistent discipline and lack of supervision

Warning Signs — Potentially Violent Individuals

There is no exact method to predict when a person will become violent. One or more of these warning signs may be displayed before a person becomes violent but does *not* necessarily indicate that an individual *will* become violent. A display of these signs should trigger concern as they're usually exhibited by people experiencing problems:

- Irrational beliefs and ideas
- Verbal, nonverbal or written threats or intimidation
- Fascination with weaponry and/or acts of violence
- Expressions of a plan to hurt himself or others
- Externalization of blame
- Unreciprocated romantic obsession
- Taking up much of teacher's time with behavior or performance problems
- Fear reaction among fellow students or family
- Drastic change in belief systems
- Displays of unwarranted anger
- New or increased source of stress at home or school
- Inability to take criticism
- Feelings of being victimized
- Intoxication from alcohol or other substances
- Expressions of hopelessness or heightened anxiety
- Productivity and/or attendance problems
- Violence towards inanimate objects
- Steals or sabotages projects or equipment
- Lack of concern for the safety of others ♦

–Adapted from Reducing School Violence: Building a Framework for School Safety, *produced by Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (associated with the University of North Carolina-Greensboro) and the Florida Department of Education, with assistance from the Southeast Regional Center for Drug-Free Schools and Communities.*

■ Crisis Response Plan... *from page 17*

may be used. Permission slips may be needed. Plans for make-up work or forgiveness for assignments not completed due to attending the services should be made and discussed with staff members so that a consistent plan is used.

Long-term and Ongoing Disaster Intervention

Provide for on-going opportunities to deal with the crisis. This might include:

- Continue to have additional support staff and outside professionals available to students.
- Make additional resources available to teachers who will be dealing with student reactions daily.
- Think ahead to effects which might be delayed. For example: A similar incident in another location may trigger renewed feelings.
- The one year anniversary of a disaster may provide an opportunity for planning a special remembrance, thereby diverting renewed reactions if the anniversary date is ignored. ♦

Resources

Brooks, B. & Seigel, P. (1996). *The scared child: Helping kids overcome traumatic events.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): FEMA Publications, PO Box 70274, Washington, DC 20024. (202) 646-3484.

Jozwiak, T., Johnson, C. & Petersen, E. (1995). Best practices in planning for emergency management within the schools. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology-III* (pp.397-402). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Pitcher, G. & Poland, S. (1992). *Crisis intervention in the schools.* New York: Guilford Press.

Robinson, E., Rotter, J., Fey. M. & Vogel, K. (1992). *Helping children cope with fears and stress.* ERIC/CAPS (ERIC Counseling and Professional Services Clearing House).

From Helping Children at Home and School: Handouts from your School Psychologist *(NASP, 1998).*

Safe Schools Resources

Complied by Andrea Canter, Ph.D., NCSP
Minneapolis Public Schools

Books, journals

Anderson, B.(Ed.). (1995). *Taking back tomorrow: A school leader's guide to violence, security and safeguarding our school children.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association.

Brock, S. E., Sandoval, J., & Lewis, S. (1996). *Preparing for crises in the schools: A manual for building school crisis response teams.* New York: Wiley.

Brooks,B. & Siegel, P. (1996). *The scared child: Helping kids overcome traumatic events.* New York: Wiley.

Canter, A. & Carroll, S. (Eds.). (1998). *Helping children at home and school: Handouts from your school psychologist.* (Section 8: Safety and Crisis). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Centers for Disease Control (1992). *Suicide prevention programs: A resource guide.* Atlanta: Author.

Duhon-Sells, R. (1995). *Dealing with youth violence: What schools and communities need to know.* Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Dwyer, K., Osher, D., & Warger, C. (1998). *Early warning, timely response: A guide to safe schools.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. (Available at internet sites: <*www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/earlywarn.html*> or <*www.naspweb.org/center.html*>)

Garrity, C., Jens, K., Porter, W., Sager, N., & Short-Camilli, C. (1994). *Bully-proofing your school.* Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Poland, S. (1998). *School violence: Lessons learned.* Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Ross, D. (1996). *Childhood bullying and teasing: What school personnel, other professionals, and parents can do.* Washington, DC: American Counseling Association.

Walker, H. M. & Gresham, F.M. (1997). Making schools safer and violence free. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 32* (4), 199-204.

Young, M. A. (1998). *Community crisis response team training manual* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: National Organization for Victim Assistance.

Curricula

Goldstein, A., Palumbo, J., Striepling, S. & Voutsinas, A. (1995). *Break it up: A teachers' guide to managing student aggression.* Champaign, IL: Research Press (217-352-3273). Step-by-step procedures to a team approach to handling student disruption and aggression; also available on video.

Kreidler, W. J. (1994). *Conflict resolution in the middle school: A curriculum and teaching guide.* Boston: Boston Area Educators for Social Responsibilities (617-492-8820). Over 150 activities to help students deal effectively with conflict in grades 6-8. (Companion curriculum for elementary students also available– *Creative conflict resolution: Over 200 activities for keeping peace in the classroom.*)

National Crime Prevention Council (1992). *Special focus — Preventing violence: Program ideas and examples.* Washington, DC: Author (202-466-6272). A cross-section of anti-violence programs.

Peace Grows, Inc. (1992). *Alternatives to violence.* Akron, OH: Author (216-864-5442). Curriculum materials designed to reduce violence through mediation and other peaceful strategies for high school students. Includes material for training workshops of 4-40 hours.

Prothrow-Stith, D. (1987). *Violence prevention: Curriculum for adolescents.* Newton, MA: Education Development Center, Inc. (55 Chapel St, Newton, MA 02160). Sample lessons, exercises, projects and handouts to help students become aware of positive ways to deal with anger and conflict.

Shure, M.B. (1994, 1995, 1996). *Raising a thinking child.* Henry Holt & Company, Inc. (book, workbook); Bantam Doubleday Dell (auidotape). Multi-media program to teach problem-solving skills.

***Violence prevention: Totally awesome strategies for safe and drug-free schools.* (1995). Blacklick, OH: Meeks- Heit Publishing Co. (800-682-6882).** Resources, curriculum, annotated bibliography, teaching strategies. Meeks- Heit also publishes a series of Violence Prevention Student Handbooks.

Organizations, Agencies

American Association of Suicidology, 2459 S. Ash, Denver CO 80222; (303) 692-0285.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), FEMA Publications, PO Box 70274, Washington, DC 20024; (202) 646-3484.

National Crime Prevention Council, 1700 K St NW, Second Floor, Washington, DC 20006; (202) 393-7141.

National School Safety Center, 4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd, Suite 290, Westlake Village, CA 91362; (805) 373- 9977. (See quarterly journal, *School Safety.*)

National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA), 1757 Park Rd. NW, Washington, DC 20010; (800) TRY- NOVA.

National Association of School Psychologists/National Emergency Assistance Team, 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814; (301) 657-0270; website: <*http:\\www.naspweb.org*>

Online Resources

American Red Cross — <*http://www.redcross.org*>

American Indian Suicide Prevention site — <*http://www.indian-suicide.org*>

Federal Emergency Management Agency — <*http://www.fema/emi/cert/index.htm*>

Crisis Emergency Response Team information

Federal Emergency Management Agency — <*http://www.fema.org/*> — *includes information for kids.*

National Victim's Assistance Organization — <*http://www.try-nova.org*>

PTSD Resources Web Page — <*http://www.long-beach.va.gov/ptsd/stress.html*> ♦

— *Excerpted from the November 1998 issue of* Communiqué (vol.27, no.3).

What is a School Psychologist?

School psychologists are found in every school system in the nation. Over 24,000 in number, they are highly trained in education, mental health, child development and learning theory. They are problem solvers who, working with others, assist in changing environments, attitudes and systems to help children use their strengths to succeed in academic learning, social skills and citizenship. School psychologists coordinate and evaluate needs unique to individuals with special learning and behavior problems. They promote the use of research-based psychology theory to assist in curriculum, instruction and school reform. This is carried out through team problem solving; consultation; staff, teacher and parent training; research and evaluation; direct interventions; assessment; referral and case management in collaboration with other pupil services professionals, such as school social workers, counselors and others.

About NASP

The National Association of School Psychologists represents over 20,000 school psychologists and related professionals throughout the United States and in 25 foreign countries. Founded in 1969, it is the world's largest organization of school psychologists.

NASP serves its members and society by:

- Promoting the rights, welfare, education and mental health of children and youth; and
- Advancing the profession of school psychology.

This is accomplished through education, service, research and policy development. NASP credentials school psychologists through its Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) program and is a leading publisher of books for school psychologists, parents and educational professionals. Every year it holds an annual convention that is the world's largest gathering of school psychologists.

For more information about NASP, complete and return the response form below.

NASP

PLEASE SEND ME INFORMATION ABOUT:

☐ NASP Membership ☐ NASP's next Annual Convention
☐ NASP Publications ☐ NCSP Program

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

Mail to: NASP, 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814
or FAX: 301-657-0275

CUE